

Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ

(The Stories)

Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ was revealed in Makkah and contains 88 verses and 9 sections

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 to 13

طَسَمَ ﴿١﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ نَّبَا
 مُوسَى وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي
 الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيْعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يذَّبِحَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ
 وَيَسْتَحْيِ نِسَاءَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾ وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ
 عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعُّوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ
 الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٥﴾ وَنَمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ
 وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ
 أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِيفَ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي ۗ
 إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ فَالْتَقَطَهُ آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ
 لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا
 خَاطِئِينَ ﴿٨﴾ وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرْتُ عَيْنِي لِي وَلَكَ ۗ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ ۗ
 عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ

مُوسَىٰ فَرِغَاظٍ ۚ إِنَّ كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِ لَوْلَا أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ
 مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَنْ جُنْبٍ
 وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِن قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ
 أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَرَدَدْنَاهُ
 إِلَىٰ أُمِّهِ كَىٰ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۚ وَلَنَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَٰكِنَّ
 أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

Tā Sīm Mīm. [1] These are verses of the clear Book. [2] We recite to you a part of the story of Mūsā and the Pharaoh with truth for a people who believe. [3]

Indeed, the Pharaoh had become high-handed in the land and had divided its people into different groups; he used to persecute a group of them, slaughtering their sons and keeping their women alive. Indeed he was one of the mischief makers. [4] And We intended to favour those who were held as weak in the land and to make them leaders and make them inheritors (of the land) [5] and give them power in the land, and to make the Pharaoh, Hāmān and their armies see (that) what they were fearing from (had happened). [6]

And We inspired the mother of Mūsā saying, "Suckle him (Mūsā). Then once you fear about him, cast him in the river, and do not fear and do not grieve. Surely We are going to bring him back to you and appoint him one of (Our) messengers. [7] So the family of the Pharaoh picked him up, so that he becomes for them an enemy and a (cause of) grief. Indeed the Pharaoh, Hāmān and their armies were mistaken. [8] And the wife of the Pharaoh said, (to the Pharaoh about Mūsā), "He may be a delight of eye for me and you. Do not kill him. It is hoped that he will be of benefit to us, or we will adopt him as a son." And they were not aware (of what was going to happen). [9]

And the heart of the mother of Mūsā became restless; indeed she was about to disclose this (the real facts

about Mūsā), had We not strengthened her heart to remain among those who have firm belief (in Allah's promise). [10] And she said to his sister, "Keep track of him." So she watched him from a distance while they were not aware. [11] And We had already barred him (Mūsā) from (accepting) any suckling women, so she (his sister) said (to the Pharaoh's people), "Shall I point out to you a family who will nurse him for you, and they will be his care-takers?" [12] Thus We brought him back to his mother, so that her eye might have comfort and she might not grieve, and so that she might know that Allah's promise is true, but most of them do not know. [13]

Commentary

Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ is the very last among the Makkī Sūrahs. It was revealed between Makkah and Juḥfah (Rābiḡh) during the migration. It is mentioned in some narrations that during the journey from Makkah to Madīnah when the Holy Prophet ﷺ reached near Juḥfah or Rābiḡh, Jibra'īl عليه السلام came to him and enquired whether he was feeling home sick, as he was leaving the place where he was born and spent all his life. To this the Holy Prophet ﷺ replied in the affirmative. Then Jibra'īl عليه السلام recited this Sūrah and gave him ﷺ the good tidings that ultimately Makkah will fall to him and come under his ﷺ control. The related verse is as follows:

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَأْدُكَ إِلَى مَعَادٍ

Surely the one who has enjoined the Qur'an upon you will surely bring you back to the place of return - 28:85

Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ begins with the story of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, first briefly then in detail. First half of the Sūrah contains Sayyidnā Mūsā's episodes with the Pharaoh, and towards the end of the Sūrah his episode with Qārūn is related.

The story of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام is related extensively in the Qur'an, at places briefly while at others in detail. In Sūrah Al-Kahf (Cave) that part of the story is related in which he encountered Al-Khaḍir عليه السلام. Then, in Sūrah Ṭāhā other parts of the story are related in some detail, while some details are related in Sūrah An-Naml. Now, in Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ they are being reiterated. In Sūrah Ṭāhā where Allah Ta'ālā has said about

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ (And We tested you with a great ordeal - 20:40). Imām Nasā'ī and some other commentators have penned down the entire story at that point. The writer has followed suit, and by quoting Ibn Kathīr has written the whole story under Sūrah Ṭāhā. All the relevant parts of the story, it's related important issues, and rulings have been discussed in detail under Sūrahs al-Kahf and Ṭāhā. For any reference of an issue or ruling it would be apt to look up there. Now in this Sūrah commentary will be restricted to brief explanation of the wordings of these verses.

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً (And We intended to favour those who were held as weak in the land and to make them leaders - 28:5). In this verse it is emphasized that the plan of the the Pharaoh was not equal to that of the divine fate, rather it turned out to be completely ineffective and he and his entire courtiers were befooled. On the basis of the dream and it's interpretation about an Isrā'īli boy from whom the life of the Pharaoh was at risk, and because of which hundreds of newly born Isrā'īli male issues were put to death on their birth, it so turned out that Allah Ta'ālā made that very boy to grow up in his own house. Not only that, but for the solace of his mother it was arranged to send him back to her for nursing in a most astonishing manner. On top of that the Pharaoh was made to pay a service charge for nursing, which according to some narrations was one Dīnār a day. Since this service charge was taken from an infidel with his consent, hence there is no confusion about its admissibility. The cruelty he had perpetrated to quell the risk was of no avail to him, because that very danger was ultimately made to rear in his own home, and ultimately erupted like lava. This way the dream came true, and he saw that happening with his own eyes. The verse وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ وَرَبِّي فِرْعَوْنَ (and to make the Pharaoh and Hāmān and their armies see [that] what they were fearing from (had actually happened - 28:6) describes this only.

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ (28:7) The word Waḥy (inspiration) is used here in its literal meaning. It does not mean the Waḥy that is peculiar to prophets. This point has already been explained under Sūrah Ṭāhā.

Verses 14 - 21

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ، وَاسْتَوَىٰ أَيْتَهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ط وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي

الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَى حِينٍ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ
 فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ ۖ هَذَا مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ ۖ فَاسْتَعَاثَهُ
 الَّذِي مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ ۗ فَوَكَرَهُ مُوسَى فَقَضَى
 عَلَيْهِ ۗ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالَ
 رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَهُ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ
 ﴿١٦﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ
 ﴿١٧﴾ فَاصْبَحَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي اسْتَنْصَرَهُ
 بِالْأَمْسِ يَسْتَصْرِخُهُ ۗ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَى إِنَّكَ لَغَوِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾ فَلَمَّا
 أَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَبْطِشَ بِالَّذِي هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَهُمَا ۗ قَالَ يَمُوسَى أَتَرِيدُ أَنْ
 تَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا بِالْأَمْسِ ۗ إِنَّ تُرِيدُ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِي
 الْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ
 أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْعَى ۗ قَالَ يَمُوسَى إِنَّ الْمَلَآئِمَآءَ يَأْتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ
 فَاخْرُجْ إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ۗ
 قَالَ رَبِّ نَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

And when he reached his maturity and became perfect, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. And in this manner We reward those who do good. [14] And he entered the city at a time of unawareness of its people; so he found in it two men fighting each other: This one was from his own group and that one from his enemies. So the one from his own group called him for help against the one who was from his enemies. So Mūsā struck him with his fist and finished him off. (Then) He (Mūsā) said (out of remorse), "This is some of Satan's act. He is indeed a clear enemy who misleads." [15] He said, "O my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me." So He forgave him. Indeed He is the most Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [16] He (Mūsā) said, "O my Lord, since

You have favoured me, I will never be a supporter of the sinners." [17]

Then next morning he was fearful, waiting (for what comes next) when the man who sought his help the day before, shouted to him for help (again). Mūsā said to him, "You are surely an apparent trouble-maker." [18] Thereafter when he intended to grasp at the one who was an enemy to both of them, the latter said, "O Mūsā, do you want to kill me as you have killed a person yesterday? You intend nothing but to become a tyrant in the land, and you do not intend to be one of the peace-makers." [19]

And there came a man running, from the farthest part of the city. He said, "The chiefs are counselling each other about you, so that they kill you. So, leave (the city). I am one of your well-wishers." [20] So, he went out of it (the city) in a state of fear, waiting (for what comes next). He said, "O my Lord, save me from the cruel people." [21]

Commentary

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَاسْتَوَى (And when he reached his maturity and became perfect - 28:14). The literal meaning of 'ashudd (أَشَدُّ) is to attain the peak of strength or intensity. For instance a person gradually develops from the position of juvenile weakness to the strength of adulthood. A time comes when he has attained full strength and vigour that he could achieve. That point in life is called 'ashudd. In different parts of the world and for different people this point in life varies according to climate, character of the land, race etc. Some people attain it early while others take time. 'Abd Ibn Ḥumaid has reported that Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ and Mujāhid have placed the age of 'ashudd as 33rd year of one's life. This is called the age of perfection or the age of discernment, when the development of body stops after reaching its peak. After this age a period of hold commences, which lasts until the age of forty. This period is mentioned in the verse as *Istawa* (translated above as became perfect). After the age of forty years the decline and weakness sets in. Hence, it can be said that 'ashudd (أَشَدُّ) of a person starts from the age of 33 years and lasts through 40 years. (Rūḥ, Qurṭubī).

أَنبِئْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا (We gave him wisdom and knowledge - 28:14) The word

(حُكْم) *Hukm* (translated above as 'wisdom') is used here for prophethood, and the word 'knowledge' refers to the knowledge of divine injunctions.

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينٍ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا (And he entered the city at a time of unawareness of its people - 15). Most commentators have interpreted that the word 'city' is used here for the main city of Egypt. The words 'he entered' indicate that Mūsā عليه السلام, had gone away somewhere out of Egypt. Then he entered back at a time when people normally sleep. It is also mentioned in the incident of killing of the 'Qibṭī' that it was the time when Mūsā عليه السلام had already announced his prophethood and had started preaching the religion of truth. As a result of his preaching some people had converted, and were known as his disciples. The word *مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ* (from his group - 28:15) is a proof of that. All these versions give credence to the narration which is quoted by Ibn Ishāque and Ibn Zaid that when Mūsā عليه السلام had started talking to the people about the religion of truth, the Pharaoh turned against him and wanted to kill him. But on the appeal of his wife, Sayyidah 'Āsiyah, he restrained himself, and instead commanded him to go in exile. After that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام shifted to some hiding place and would come to the city of Egypt occasionally in hiding. Most commentators are of the opinion that by *عَلَىٰ حِينٍ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا* (28:15) the time of afternoon is meant, when people generally take a siesta. (Qurtubī)

فَوَكَرَهُ مُوسَىٰ (So Mūsā struck him with his fist). *Wakaza* (وَكَّرَ) means to box *فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ* (28:15). The phrase of *Qaḍāhu* (قَضَاهُ) and *Qaḍā 'Alaihi* (قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ) is used when one is totally finished. Hence, here it means that he killed him. (Maḥzarī)

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَهُ (He said, "O my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me." So he forgave him - 28:16). The gist of this verse is that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام regarded the killing of the infidel Qibṭī as a sin, despite the fact that it had happened without any intention on his part, because it was in conflict with his status of prophethood, and thus below his dignity. So, he begged Allah's pardon for the act, which was duly granted.

The first question that arises here is that this Qibṭī was an infidel combatant (*ḥarbi*) in the religious term. Hence, his killing was permissible and preferable, because he was neither a *dhimmi* (ذِمِّي), i.e the citizen of

an Islamic state nor under any covenant with Mūsā عليه السلام. Then why did Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام regarded it a sin and an act of Satan? His killing should have been regarded as an act worth the reward, because the Qibṭī was harming a Muslim unjustly, and got killed in the process when Mūsā عليه السلام tried to save the life of the Muslim. The answer to this question is that covenants of peace are sometimes written or spoken in express words, and sometimes they come into effect by consistent practice of the parties that amounts to an implied agreement and is as good as a written covenant. Violation of the covenants of this type is also prohibited in Islam. The covenant established by practice can be understood by the example that if in a non-Islamic state Muslims and non-Muslims are living in harmony and there is no conflict between them, and any pillage or fighting with each other is regarded as treachery, then this consistent practice of co-existence would be regarded as an implied agreement for peaceful living, and its violation is not allowed. The proof of this principle can be found in a lengthy *ḥadīth* of Sayyidnā Mughīrah Ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه that has been reported by Imām Bukhārī in his book in the chapter entitled as 'Kitāb Ash-Shurūṭ. The *ḥadīth* runs like this: Sayyidnā Mughīrah Ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه had good relations with a group of infidels before the advent of Islam, and later he killed them and took possession of all their wealth. Then he went to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and submitted to Islam, and presented all that wealth to him. On this action the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him *أما الإسلام فاقبل وأما المال فليست منه في شيء* (As far as your embracing Islam is concerned, I accept it, but I have nothing to do with this wealth) Abū Dāwūd has quoted this *ḥadīth* like this: *أما المال فمأل غدر* (As for wealth, we have no concern with it). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم declared in this *ḥadīth* that he accepted his submission to Islam, but this wealth has been snatched by breach of trust and was a treachery, hence he did not have any desire for this wealth. Ḥafīz Ibn Ḥajar has observed in his commentary that this *ḥadīth* has laid down the principle that grabbing of wealth of the infidels during peacetime is not permissible. It is for the simple reason that people living together in a city or township or those who work together regard themselves secured from each other. The agreement established through their practice is like a trust, which must be honoured by each and every person, no matter whether he is a Muslim or an infidel. The property of infidels permitted for possession by the Muslims is only that which is acquired during a war

with them. It is not permitted to grab the wealth of infidels during peacetime, when one feels secured from one another. Qaṣṭalānī has observed in his commentary on Bukhārī as follows:

انّ اموال المشركين ان كانت مغنومة عند القهر فلا يحل اخذها عند الامن، فاذا كان الانسان مصاحباً لهم فقد امن كل واحد منهم صاحبه، فسفك الدماء و اخذ المال مع ذلك غدر حرام الا ان ينبذ اليهم عهدهم على سواء

‘No doubt the wealth of infidels is permitted (to take possession) during war or *jihād*, but in peacetime it is not lawful. Therefore, any Muslim living and socializing with infidels in the manner that they are safe and secure for each other, for him it is unlawful to slay them, or forcefully grab their wealth, unless the peace agreement established through practice is abrogated through an announcement’.

The gist of the discussion is that if the Qibṭī would have been killed with preconceived resolve in the presence of an implied peace agreement, it would not have been lawful. But Mūsā عليه السلام did not have the intention of killing the Qibṭī. He only hit him with his bare hands to save the Isrā’īlī from his grip. In the normal course, it should not have been fatal, but he died all the same by that blow. Then Mūsā عليه السلام realized that a lighter blow would also have done the job of getting rid of him. Realizing that harder blow was not needed, he repented and invoked Allah’s mercy.

Special Note

The above principle was explained to me by Sayyidi Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thanāvī رحمه الله تعالى, when I was writing the commentary of Surah Al-Qaṣaṣ in Aḥkāmul-Qur’ān, the Arabic commentary written under his supervision. It is the last academic discourse of Sayyidi from which I have benefited, as he had completed this work on Rajab 2, 1362 A.H, and after that his sickness intensified and on Rajab 16, 1362, he passed away. انا لله . وانا اليه راجعون.

Some commentators have observed that although killing of the Qibṭī was permissible, but prophets take extra care in special cases even in performing permissible acts and avoid them, unless they receive a cue from Allah Ta’ālā. On this occasion Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام did not wait for the permission from Allah Ta’ālā and acted on his own. Therefore, in view of his status as a prophet, he maintained that it was a sin on his part, and hence, invoked Allah’s pardon. (Rūḥ)

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ (He [Mūsā] said, "O my Lord, since You have favoured me, I will never be a supporter to the sinners." - 28:17). When Allah Ta'ālā pardoned this slip of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, he said in gratitude to Allah Ta'ālā that he would never again help a criminal. The second incident of the quarrel had proved that the Isrā'īlī in whose defense Mūsā عليه السلام had involved himself in the brawl was quarrelsome. Therefore, by declaring him a criminal he vowed not to help such a person again. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه while explaining this verse, has maintained that the word 'criminals' stands here for infidels. Qatādah has also interpreted the verse in almost the same way. On the basis of these commentaries it seems that actually the Isrā'īlī, whom Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had defended, was not a Muslim but he helped him considering that he was an oppressed person.

Rulings

It is worth noting here that this saying of Mūsā عليه السلام has established two rulings about two issues. One, that even if an oppressed person is a sinner or infidel, he should be helped. The second ruling is that it is not permitted to help any criminal or oppressor. Scholars have argued on the basis of this verse that working in the employment of cruel rulers is also not permitted, for they too would be regarded as their associates. Many citations from the righteous *salaf* (elders) have also been quoted in support of this argument. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī) To provide support to the oppressors or to the infidels may take different forms. The different rulings about these forms are laid down in the books of *fiqh* in detail. This humble writer has also dealt with the subject in his Arabic book *Aḥkāmul-Qur'ān* with greater elaboration. The scholars interested in the subject may consult it.

Verses 22 - 28

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تِلْقَاءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَى رَبِّي أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٢٢﴾
 وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ ۖ
 وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ ۗ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا ۗ قَالَتَا
 لَأَنسُقِيَّ حَتَّىٰ يُصْدِرَ الرَّعَاءُ ۗ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَسَقَىٰ

لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
 فَقِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَجَاءَهُهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ ۖ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي
 يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۗ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ
 الْقِصَصَ ۗ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ ۗ نَحْنُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَتْ
 إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا بَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ ۗ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنْ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ
 ﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنْكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي
 ثَمْنِي حِجَجٍ ۗ فَإِنْ أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ ۗ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ
 عَلَيْكَ ۗ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ ذَلِكَ بَيْنِي
 وَبَيْنَكَ أَيَّمَا الْأَجْلَيْنِ فَضَيِّتُ فَلَا عُدْوَانَ عَلَيَّ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى مَا
 نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

And when he set out towards Madyan, he said, "I hope my Lord will guide me to the straight path". [22] And when he arrived at the waters of Madyan, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) and found, aloof from them, two women keeping back (their animals). He said, "What is the matter with you?" They said, "We cannot water (our animals) unless the shepherds bring (their animals) back and our father is very old man." [23] So he (Mūsā) watered (their animals) for their sake, then he turned to a shade and said, "O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me." [24]

Then one of the two women came to him, walking with shyness. She said, "My father is calling you, so that he rewards you with something in return of your watering for us. So when he (Mūsā) came to him (the father of the women) and narrated to him the whole story, the latter said, "Do not fear; you have escaped from the wrongdoing people." [25] One of the two women said, "Dear father, hire him; the best man you hire is the one who is strong, trustworthy." [26] He (the father) said (to Mūsā), "I wish to marry one of these two daughters of

mine to you on the condition that you serve me for eight years. Then if you complete ten (years) it will be of your own accord. And I do not want to put you in any trouble; you will find me, Inshallah (God-willing) one of the righteous." [27] He (Mūsā) said, "This is (done) between me and you. Whichever of the two terms I fulfill, there should be no excess against me, and Allah is witness to what we are saying." [28]

Commentary

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تَلْقَاءَ مَدْيَنَ (And when he set out towards Madyan - 28:22). Madyan (مَدْيَنَ) is the name of a city in *Shām* (a large territory now consisting of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine) which was named after Madyan, the son of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام. This area was outside the empire of the Pharaoh. It was eight days journey from Egypt. When Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام was taken over by the natural fright of the pursuing army of the Pharaoh, which was not in conflict either with the prophethood or with trust in Allah, he resolved to leave Egypt. Perhaps he decided to proceed toward Madyan because it was a habitation of the descendants of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, and he was also his progeny.

When Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام left Egypt, he was in a condition that he had neither any provisions for the journey nor any baggage, and also he did not know the route. In this state of helplessness he turned to Allah Ta'ālā and asked عَسَىٰ رَبِّيٰ أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ (I hope my Lord will guide me to the straight path - 28:22), Allah Ta'ālā accepted this prayer. Scholars have observed that the only food Mūsā عليه السلام had during this journey was the leaves of trees. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه has said that this was the first trial and test of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام. Details of trials and tests of Mūsā عليه السلام have already been described under Sūrah Ṭahā while quoting a lengthy *ḥadīth*.

وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ (And when he arrived at the waters of Madyan, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) - 28:23) مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ (waters of Madyan) refers to the well from where people of that place used to make their animals drink water. وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ (found, aloof from them, two women keeping back (their animals) - 23). That is he saw two girls stopping their goats from going to the water, so that they did not get mixed up with other goats.

“قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَقَالْنَا لَانَسَقِي حَتَّى يُصْدِرَ الرَّعَاءُ وَابُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ” (He said, "What is the matter with you?" They said, "We cannot water (our animals) unless the shepherds bring (their animals) back and our father is very old man." - 28:23). The word خَطْبٌ *Khatb* means "matter". The sense is that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام asked the two girls 'What was it that you are stopping your goats from coming to the well for drinking water like other goats? The two girls answered that, in order to avoid mixing with men-folk, they used to make their goats wait until men had left the place after watering their animals. The question arose here whether they did not have any male member in the family to do this job . The girls answered this question on their own by saying that their father was very old and could not perform this job. This is why they were doing the job.

Some very important points are learnt by this incident. One, that it was the practice of the prophets to help the weak. Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام saw that two girls had brought their goats for drinking water, but they were unable to find room because of the rush of people. Therefore, he asked them about their problem. Two, that there is no harm to talk to stranger women, if no mischief is involved. Three, that although this incident had happened when *ḥijāb* was not enjoined, a situation that continued even in the early days of Islam (*ḥijāb* was enjoined in Madīnah after the Hijrah), but the underlying spirit of *ḥijāb*, i.e the natural instinct of modesty and bashfulness, was there even in those days. Because of this natural instinct the two girls preferred hardship rather than getting mixed with men-folk. Four, that it was not considered desirable for women even in those days to go out and perform such type of duties. It was for this reason that they put forward the justification that their father was very old and weak.

فَسَقَى لَهُمَا (So he (Mūsā) watered (their animal) for their sake - 28:24). That is Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام took pity on the girls and drew out water from the well and satiated their goats. It is reported in some narrations that the shepherds after making their cattle drink water used to place a very heavy stone on the mouth of the well to make it unusable, and hence these girls would have only the left over water for their herd. The stone was so heavy that ten men together could move it, but Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام removed it all by himself, and drew water from the well. Perhaps for this reason one of the two girls reported to her father that Sayyidnā Mūsā

عليه السلام) was very strong. (Qurṭubī)

ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ (Then he turned to a shade and said, "O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me." - 28:24). Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام did not have any food for the last seven days. He came under the shade of a tree and prayed to Allah describing his condition and need in an exquisite manner. The word *Khair* is sometimes used for wealth as in the case of خَيْرِهِ الوَصِيَّةُ (he leaves some wealth - 2:180). Sometimes it is used for strength like أَهْمُ خَيْرٌ أَمْ قَوْمٌ تُبَعِّعُ (Are they better, or the people of Tubba - 44:37) and sometimes for food as in the verse under reference. (Qurṭubī)

فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ (Then one of the two women came to him walking with shyness. - 28:25). In accordance with Qur'ānic practice the story has been summarized here. The full story runs like this: When the two girls reached home earlier than usual, their father enquired the reason for that. So they related to him the whole incident. Their father thought that he should make up for the favour Mūsā عليه السلام had done to his daughters. Hence he asked one of his daughters to bring him with her. She went to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام and talked to him with an element of modesty. This shows that despite the fact that *hijāb* was not enjoined by then, good women would not talk to men freely. She went to him with a need, so she talked with shyness. Some commentators have given the detail of her shyness that while talking she had raised her sleeve up to her face. The narrations as related in commentaries say that Mūsā عليه السلام had asked her to walk behind him and guide him from the back. The objective was that he could not cast his eye on her. Perhaps for this reason she told her father about him to be trustworthy.

Who was the father of these two girls? Commentators have different views on this subject. But Qur'ānic verses allude that he was Sayyidnā Shu'āib عليه السلام وَالْإِلَى مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا (7:85). (Qurṭubī)

إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ (My father is calling you - 28:25). It was possible at that time that the girl would have invited him on her own, but she did not do so. Instead, she conveyed her father's message to him, because it was against the modesty for a girl to invite a stranger at home.

إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ (The best man you hire is the one who is strong, trustworthy - 28:26), One of the daughters of Sayyidnā Shu'āib

ﷺ pleaded to her father that as he needed the services of a man to help him in his daily work at home, he might consider hiring him for this purpose. In support of her suggestion she said further that two qualities are required in a servant. One, that he should be strong, and the second, that he should be trustworthy. The girl pointed out that she had seen his strength when he removed the stone from the mouth of the well, and his integrity when he made her walk behind him.

Two important conditions for hiring a person, and assigning a job

Allah Ta‘ālā made the daughter of Sayyidnā Shu‘aib ﷺ say something of great wisdom. In the present set up of employment, great emphasis is laid at the time of interviews on scrutinizing the degrees and experience of a candidate, but no attention is paid to ascertain his integrity and trustworthiness. As a result of this, there is neither efficiency nor honesty of purpose in the offices. On the contrary bribery and nepotism are so common that there seems to be no law in operation. If people could pay heed to this Qur’ānic verse, many a problems would be solved automatically.

فَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ (He (the father) said (to Mūsā), "I wish to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on the condition that you serve me for eight years. - 28:27). Sayyidnā Shu‘aib ﷺ made the proposal of marriage of his daughter to Mūsā ﷺ on his own. It shows that the guardian of girls need not wait for the proposal to come from the boy’s side. If a suitable good match is available, the girl’s guardian may take the lead, for this has been the practice of the prophets. To quote an example, Sayyidnā ‘Umar Ibn Khaṭṭāb ﷺ had offered his daughter, Sayyidah Ḥaḥṣah رضى الله عنها, for marriage to Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ﷺ and to Sayyidnā ‘Uthmān ﷺ when she became widow. (Qurṭubī)

إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ (one of these daughters of mine - 28:27). Sayyidnā Shu‘aib ﷺ did not make the selection of one or the other girl for the proposal of marriage, rather he kept it vague. It was not the formal *nikāḥ*, that requires offer and acceptance in presence of two witnesses, but only a discussion to have his consent to work for eight years in lieu of marriage with a girl. Sayyidnā Mūsā ﷺ agreed to the proposal, and got married to one of the girls. The Holy Qur’ān does not describe every detail of a story, the happening of which is obvious from the context. Therefore, it

cannot be doubted here that without pinpointing the bride and without the presence of witnesses how the *nikāḥ* was solemnized. (Rūḥ, Bayān ul Qur'ān)

عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَنِي حَجَجٍ (on the condition that you serve me for eight years - 28:27). Eight years service and employment was regarded the *mahr* (dower)(the dower) of marriage. Scholars have different points of view on the issue, whether a service rendered to one's wife can be taken as a valid *mahr* (dower) or not. The subject is dealt with in detail in *Aḥkāmul-Qur'ān* in Arabic language, under Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ. Those who are interested can study the details there. For the common man it is enough to understand that if it is not allowed in the Muḥammadī law, it might have been permitted in the code of law followed by Shu'aib عليه السلام. It is not uncommon to have minor differences in the laws (Shari'ah) brought by various prophets.

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah has ruled in his *Zāhir-ur-Riwāyah* that the service rendered for one's wife cannot be considered as a valid *mahr* (dower). But in a later ruling by the scholars it is elaborated that though it is against the honour and dignity of husband to serve his wife in lieu of *mahr* (dower), but any duty performed outside the house, such as grazing of cattle or trading, can be made a substitute for it, provided a time frame is agreed upon before hand, as was in the case of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, where the parties had agreed before hand on eight years period of service. The reason is that the remuneration of the husband payable by his wife in this case will be treated as *mahr* (dower). (Badā'ī, from Nawādir Ibn Samā'ah).

Another question that arises here is that the *mahr* (dower) is the right of wife, and if it is paid to her father or any other relative without her consent, it will be taken as not paid. In this incident the words عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي are a proof enough that Shu'aib عليه السلام had hired him for his duty. So, the benefit of service went to him. In that situation how could this be regarded as *mahr* (dower) of the wife? The answer to this question is that it is quite probable that the herd of goats was the property of the girls, and therefore, the benefit of service went to his wife. Alternatively, if the goats belonged to the father and the wages were due from him, then the money of the wages payable by the father belonged to the wife, as her *mahr* (dower). It is lawful for a father to spend the money of his daughter

with her permission. It is quite obvious that this whole deal was carried out with the consent of the girl.

Ruling

The word **أُنكِحَكَ** (I wish to marry...with you) has proved that the father had arranged the *nikāh*. Jurists are unanimous that it should be done as such. It is the father's duty and privilege to make arrangements of daughter's marriage. A girl should not arrange her own marriage. But there is difference of opinion between jurists on the issue whether the *nikah* is lawful or not, if a girl arranges her own marriage due to some need or pressure. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah has ruled that it is lawful. However, this verse is silent on the issue.

Verses 29 - 35

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَىٰ الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ آنَسَ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ نَارًا ۖ
 قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّي آتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ
 مِنَ النَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِنْ شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ
 الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبْرَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَنْ يُمُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ
 الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّى
 مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۖ يُمُوسَىٰ أَقْبِلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ ۖ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْآمِنِينَ
 ﴿٣١﴾ أَسْلُكَ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجُ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ وَاضْمُمُ
 إِلَيْكَ جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ الرَّهْبِ فَذُنُوكِ بُرْهَانٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ
 وَمَلَائِهِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَسِيقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ
 نَفْسًا فَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَأَخِي هَارُونُ هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا
 فَأَرْسَلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءًا يُصَدِّقُنِي ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُكَدِّبُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ قَالَ
 سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكَ مَلَأْنَا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا ۖ
 بِإِذْنِنَا ۖ أَنْتُمْ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمْ ۖ الْعَالِيُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

So, when Mūsā completed the term and set forth with his wife, he noticed a fire from the direction of the (mount) Ṭūr, he said to his wife, "Stay here; I have noticed a fire. May be I bring to you some information or an ember from the fire, so that you may warm yourself." [29] So when he came to it, he was called by a voice coming from a side of the right valley in the blessed ground, from the tree, saying, "O Mūsā, I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds." [30] And saying, "Throw down your staff." So when he saw it moving as if it were a snake, he turned back in retreat and did not look back. (Allah said to him), "O Mūsā come forward and do not fear; you are one of those in peace. [31] Insert your hand into your bosom, and it will come out white without any evil (disease), and press your arm to your side for (removing) fear. Thus these are two proofs from your Lord (sent) to the the Pharaoh and his chiefs. Indeed they are transgressing people." [32]

He said, "My Lord, I have killed a person from them; therefore I fear that they will kill me. [33] And my brother Hārūn is more fluent with his tongue than I am; so send him with me as a helper who will bear me out. I am afraid, they will belie me." [34] He (Allah) said, "We will make your arm stronger through (the help of) your brother and will make you have the upper hand, so they will not reach you (to cause any harm) because of Our signs.* You both and those who follow you will be victorious." [35]

Commentary

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ (So When Mūsā completed the term - 28:29). Then Sayyidna Mūsā عليه السلام completed his term of service, which was eight years compulsory and two years optional. A question arises here, whether he completed eight years of service or ten year's. Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī has reported that when this question was put to Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, he answered ten years, and added that prophets always fulfill their commitments, rather they do more than what they agree to. The Holy

* Another possible translation with a slight change in punctuation is as follows: "and will make for you the upper hand, so they will not reach you (with any harm). Because of Our signs, you both and those who follow you will be victorious." (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

Prophet ﷺ was also in the habit of giving more than due to the one having a right. He ﷺ has also advised the Ummah to be selfless and considerate in the matters of employment, wages, and business dealings.

نُودَىٰ مِنْ شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَنْ يَمْوَسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ (He was called by a voice coming from a side of the right valley in the blessed ground, from the tree, saying" O Mūsā, I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds" - 28:30). This subject was also mentioned in Sūrahs Ṭāhā and An-Naml in the story of Mūsā عليه السلام. In Sūrah Ṭāhā it is said إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ (it is Me your Lord - 20:12) and in Sūrah An-Naml نُودَىٰ أَنْ بُورِكَ مَنْ فِي النَّارِ (So when he came to it, he was called: "Blessed is the one who is in the fire - 27:8), while in the present Sūrah (Al-Qaṣaṣ) it appears as إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ (I am Allah the Lord of the worlds - 28:30). Although the wordings are slightly different here, yet the meanings are almost the same. The incident is related in the words which suited to the situation being described. كَذَا قَالَ (الامام). The refulgence that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had seen in the form of fire was only in the form of an example (*mithālī*), because it is impossible for a worldly being to see the actual refulgence of Allāh Ta'ālā. Mūsā عليه السلام is called لَنْ تَرَانِي (7:143) (You will never see Me) in respect of actual refulgence.

The place also becomes auspicious if righteous deeds are performed there

فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ (In the blessed ground - 28:30). The Holy Qur'an has termed the mount Ṭūr as blessed ground. It is obvious that the reason of its being auspicious is the refulgence of Allāh Ta'ālā, which was manifested at that spot in the form of fire. It proves that if something virtuous happens at a place, that particular spot also turns auspicious.

A sermon should have high degree of eloquence

هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا (He is more fluent in his tongue - 28:34). This verse points out that a high degree of oratory and eloquence is desirable for sermons and preaching, and there is no harm if one takes training in that.

Verses 36 - 42

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرَىٰ وَمَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ

جَاءَ بِالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ وَمَنْ تَكُونُ لَهُ، عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ
 الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهِ
 غَيْرِي ۗ فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانَ عَلَى الطِّينِ فَاجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ
 إِلَىٰ إِلَهِ مُوسَىٰ ۗ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ
 وَجُنُودُهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا يُرْجَعُونَ
 ﴿٣٩﴾ فَآخَذْنَاهُ وَجُنُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ ۗ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
 الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۗ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
 لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ وَاتَّبَعْنَاهُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً ۗ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُمْ
 مِنَ الْمَقْبُوحِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

So when Mūsā came to them with Our clear signs, they said, "This is nothing but a forged magic, and we did not hear about it among our forefathers." [36] And Mūsā said, "My Lord knows best the one who has come with guidance from Him and who is going to have the best end of the abode. It is certain that the wrongdoers will not succeed." [37]

And the Pharaoh said, "O chiefs, I do not know of any god for you other than me. So kindle for me, O Hāmān, a fire on the clay (to bake bricks) and build for me a tower, so that I may look on to the God of Mūsā. And I deem him to be one of the liars." [38] And he and his hosts became over-proud in the land without justification and thought that they would not be returned to Us. [39] So We seized him and his hosts and threw them into the sea. Look then, how was the fate of the wrongdoers. [40] And We had made them leaders who called (people) towards hell. And on the Day of Judgment they will not be helped. [41] And We made a curse to pursue them in this world; and on the Day of Judgment they will be among those treated badly. [42]

Commentary

فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانَ عَلَى الطِّينِ (So kindle for me, O Hāmān, a fire on the clay (to

bake bricks) - 28:38). When the Pharaoh planned to build a very tall palace for himself, he asked his minister Hāmān to get the bricks baked properly first, because half baked bricks could not take the load of a tall building. Some people have observed that the Pharaoh was the first one to have tough bricks baked for the buildings, as no one had used them before. Historical narrations have recorded that Hāmān had collected fifty thousand masons for building this palace. Skilled labour, such as carpenters and blacksmith, were additional. This palace was built so tall that there was no parallel to it in the world. When it was completed, Allah Ta'ālā commanded Jibra'īl (جبرائيل) to knock it down. He struck only one blow to it and it tumbled down in three pieces, killing thousands of soldiers of the Pharaoh's army. (Qurṭubī)

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ (And We had made them leaders who called (people) towards hell. - 28:41). Allah Ta'ālā had elevated the courtiers of the Pharaoh as leaders of their people, but these wrong-doers were busy inviting the people towards fire – *jahannam*. Most commentators have taken the expression 'invitation to fire' as a metaphor. That is, by fire the allusion is toward evil deeds that will result in burning in the fire of Jahannam. But according to the work of my respected teacher Sayyidnā Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Anwār Shah Kashmirī رحمه الله تعالى the reward of the Hereafter is the deed itself. One's deeds in this world will change their forms first in *barzakh* and then in *maḥshar*. The righteous deeds will change into flowers and gardens and take the shape of the bounties of paradise; and the evil deeds will turn into snakes and scorpions, ultimately manifesting themselves in various types of torments. Therefore, if someone invites any one in this world toward evil and infidelity, he in fact is bidding him to go into the fire. Although these evils do not manifest themselves in this world as fire, yet in reality they are fire. Thus there is no metaphor in the verse, and it rests with its true meaning. If this course of argument is adopted in explaining the verses of Qur'ān, then many of them will get rid of dependence on metaphors; and it will make the reading easy and straightforward. For instance, وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا (And they will find what they did all there - 18:49) or مَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنْ شَرِّ خَيْرٍ إِذَرَهُ (Whoever does good to the measure of a particle will see it.- 99:7)

وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُمْ مِنَ الْمَقْبُورِينَ (And on the Day of Judgment they will be

among those treated badly - 28:42). *Maqbūhīn* is the plural of *Maqbūh*, which means spoilt, damaged or disfigured. Thus the meaning of the verse is that on the Doomsday their faces will be disfigured to turn black, and eyes will turn blue.

Verses 43 - 51

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الْأُولَى
بَصَائِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَمَا كُنْتَ
بِجَانِبِ الْغُرُبَى إِذْ قَضَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنْتَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ
﴿٤٤﴾ وَلَكِنَّا أَنْشَأْنَا قُرُونًا فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ وَمَا كُنْتَ ثَاوِيًا
فِي أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ تَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا ۗ وَلَكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَمَا
كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الطُّورِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَكِنْ رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا
مَّا أَتَاهُمْ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَلَوْلَا أَن
تُصِيبَهُمْ مُّصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمْتَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَيَقُولُوا رَبَّنَا لَوْلَا أَرْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا
رَسُولًا فَتَتَّبِعَ آيَاتِكَ وَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ
مِن عِنْدِنَا قَالُوا لَوْلَا أُوتِيَ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا
أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ قَالُوا سِحْرَانِ تَظَاهَرَا ۗ وَقَالُوا إِنَّا بِكُلِّ
كُفْرُونٍ ﴿٤٨﴾ قُلْ فَاتُوا بِكِتَابٍ مِّن عِنْدِ اللَّهِ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ مِنْهُمَا ۗ إِنَّمَا تَتَّبِعُونَ
أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۗ وَمَن أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

And We gave Mūsā, after We destroyed the earlier generations, the Book having insights for people and a guidance and mercy, so that they may take to advice.

[43] And you (O Muḥammad) were not there at the Western side (of the mount Ṭūr) when We delegated the matter to Mūsā, nor were you among those present, [44] but We created generations (after him) and a long time passed over them. And you were not dwelling among the people of Madyān, reciting Our verses to them, but it is We who do send messengers. [45] And you were not at the side of (the mount) Ṭūr when We called (Mūsā), but it (your prophethood through which you knew all this) is a mercy from your Lord, so that you warn a people to whom no warner has come before you, that they may take to advice. [46] And (We would not have sent the messenger) if there would have been no apprehension that, in case they suffered a calamity because of what their hands sent ahead, they would say, "Our Lord, why did You not send a messenger to us, so that we would be among the believers?" [47] But when the Truth came to them from Us, they said, "Why has he (the messenger) not been given (a book) similar to what Mūsā had been given?" Is it not that they denied what Mūsā had been given before? They said, "Both (Qur'ān and Torah) are works of magic that support each other." And they said, "We disbelieve each one of them." [48] Say, "Then bring a book from Allah which is better than both, in guidance, and I shall follow it, if you are true." [49] So if they do not respond to you, be sure that they are only following their desires. And who is more astray than the one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah. Surely Allah does not take the wrongdoing people to the right path. [50] And We have conveyed (Our) word to them one after the other, so that they may take to advice. [51]

Commentary

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الْأُولَىٰ بَصَائِرَ لِلنَّاسِ (And We gave Mūsā, after We destroyed the earlier generations, the Book having insights for people - 28:43). The words "earlier generations" refer to the people of Nūḥ, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, and Lūṭ عليه السلام, who were destroyed before the time of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام because of their denial of truth. *Baṣā'ir* بَصَائِر is the plural of *Baṣīrah* بَصِيرَةٌ, whose literal meaning is sagacity, insight and discernment. Here it is purported for that light or refulgence which Allah Ta'ālā bestows in the hearts of people with which they find out the truth and discern the distinction between right and wrong. (Maḥzarī)

If the word *Nās* ناس (people) is used in the phrase *بَصَائِرَ لِلنَّاسِ* (28:43) (insights for people) for the people of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, then the meaning of the verse is quite clear. No doubt for the people of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام Torah was the book of wisdom. But if the word is used for all people in whom the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ is also included, then the question would arise that the Torah, which is available to the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ, is not the original one. In this Torah many changes have taken place. So, how could this Torah be regarded as a book of wisdom for them? Moreover, it will mean that the Muslims too should benefit from the Torah, while there is a well-known *ḥadīth* that Sayyidnā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه once sought permission from the Holy Prophet ﷺ for reading Torah, so that he could improve his knowledge and benefit from the injunctions contained in it. On this the Holy Prophet ﷺ got angry and said that if Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام was alive, he too would have been required to follow him. (The essence of this retort is that he [Sayyidnā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه] should concentrate only on his teachings, and that he was not required to look into the teachings of Torah or Injīl). It is worth reminding here that it was the time when revelation of Qur’ān was still continuing, and in order to eliminate any possibility of mingling of *ḥadīth* with the Qur’ānic text, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had advised some of his companions to stop writing even the *ḥadīth*. Under such a situation it is obvious that reading of a cancelled divine book was not expedient. It, therefore, does not necessarily follow that reading of Torah and Injīl is banned for all times. On the contrary, reading and quoting by the companions of that part of these books in which coming of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was predicted is well established. Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Salām and Ka’b Al-Aḥbār رضي الله عنهما are quite well known for this. Other companions also did not raise a finger against it. The bottom line of this discussion is that it is allowed to benefit from the unaltered part of these books, which no doubt contains wisdom. But only those could draw any benefit from this who can distinguish between the altered and unaltered parts of the books; and they are the expert scholars. A common man should avoid such an exercise, lest he gets entangled in a quandary. The same ruling is applicable to all those books that are a mixture of right and wrong.

لِيُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أَتَتْهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ (so that you warn a people to whom no warner has come before - 28:46). The expression ‘a people’ is purported here for the

Arabs, who are the progeny of Sayyidnā Ismā'īl عليه السلام. No prophet was sent to this 'people' after Sayyidnā Ismā'īl عليه السلام until the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent. The same subject will follow in Sūrah Yāsīn. But this verse is not in conflict with the other verse *إِنَّ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ* (There is no community, but there has come a warner among them - 35:24). What the present verse means here is that there was no prophet in 'this people' for a long time after Ismā'īl عليه السلام. But after the arrival of the Holy Prophet ﷺ this void was filled up.

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ (And We have conveyed (Our) words to them one after the other, so that they may take to advice. - 28:51). The word *وَصَّلْنَا* (*waṣṣalnā*) is derived from *تَوْصِيلٌ* (*Tauṣīl*), which literally means to strengthen the rope by adding more strings to its strands. Here it means that Allāh Ta'ālā has maintained the continuity of guidance. Certain advisory subjects are repeated in the Qur'ān in order to make them more effective.

Certain rules for preaching

It shows that an important trait of preaching carried out by the prophets was that they used to convey the truth to people continuously. Rejection and falsifying of truth did not deter them at all from their mission. Instead, if someone did not listen to them the first time, they repeated it the second time, and if they did not succeed even the second time, they used to reiterate it a third time, and so on, without showing any sign of exhaustion. It is true that no preacher or sympathizer has power to change one's heart, but what the prophets could do was to keep on making their efforts without being dishearted or exhausted. Even today the same principle applies, and those who preach should take a serious note of it.

Verses 52 - 55

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا أَمْ نَا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْتُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَ يَذَرُوهُنَّ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ

وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلِّمْ عَلَيْنَا لَمْ نَنبَغِ
الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

As for those to whom We gave the Book before this, they believe in it (Qur'ān). [52] And when this (Qur'ān) is recited to them, they say, "We believe in it. It is the truth from our Lord. And we are the ones who submitted (to it) even before it (was revealed)." [53] Such people will be given their reward twice, because they observed patience. And they repel evil with good, and spend from what We have given to them. [54] And when they hear absurd talk, they withdraw from it and say, "Our deeds are for us and your deeds are for you. Peace be on you. We do not seek (the way of) the ignorant." [55]

Commentary

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْكِتَابِ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ (As for those to whom We gave the Book before this, they believe in it. (Qur'ān) - 28:52). In this verse those people of the book are mentioned who had faith in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and revelation of the Qur'ān on the basis of the prophecies given by Torah and Injīl, even before the coming of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Qur'ān. Thus they converted to Islam when the Holy Prophet ﷺ announced his prophethood. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has reported that forty courtiers of the king Najāshī of Ḥabshah (Ethiopia) came to Madīnah when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was busy in the Battle of Khybar. They also joined the *jihād*, and some got wounded, but none was killed. When they noticed the economic hardship of the companions, they told the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they were, by the grace of Allāh, quite wealthy, and sought his permission to bring some of it when they would come next. On this occasion this verse was revealed (الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْكِتَابِ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ (الى قوله) (52 - 54). (Marduyā, Ṭabrānī, Mazharī)

Sayyidnā Sa'īd Ibn Jubair ؓ has narrated that when Sayyidnā Ja'far ؓ had gone to Ḥabshah before the *hijrah* to Madīnah, and presented the teachings of Islam in the court of Najāshī, at that time Najāshī and many of his courtiers, who were people of the book, had submitted to Islam, as Allah Ta'ālā had put faith in their hearts. (Mazharī)

Is the word Muslim restricted to the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ or it is common to all Ummahs?

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ (And we are the ones who submitted (to it) even before it (was revealed) - 28:53). The word used by these people of the book for their submission is 'muslims' which may also be translated as 'We were Muslims even before the revelation of Qur'ān'. If the word Muslim is taken here in its literal meaning, submissive or obedient, then the meaning is quite clear that the faith they had in Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet ﷺ, because of their books, is referred here by the use of words Islam and Muslims in its literal sense of submission. But if the word 'Muslim' is taken in the same meaning in which it is regarded as appellation of the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ, then it will signify that the words 'Islam' and 'Muslim' are not restricted to Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ alone, but they are common to the Ummahs of all the prophets. But some verses of Qur'ān suggest that words 'Islam' and 'Muslim' are special names of the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ, for example the assertion of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام recorded by the Qur'ān itself هُوَ سَمَّاكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (He named you as Muslims - 22:78). 'Allāmah Suyūṭī favours this course of argument and has written a book on the subject in support of his contention. He has explained this verse advocating that the word *Muslimīn* is used here in the sense that 'we were ready and prepared to accept Islam even before'. If one looks at the issue deeply, there is no conflict in the two versions; it is possible that Islam is the common attribute of the religion of all the prophets in its literal sense, and at the same time it is a special appellation of the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ. It is like the appellations of Ṣiddīq and Fārūq that are exclusive for Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضى الله عنهم اجمعين in the context of Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ but otherwise these words can apply to anyone else also falling within the scope of their attributive meaning.

أُولَئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ (Such people will be given their reward twice - 28:54). That is, the believers who are also people of the book will be rewarded twice. A similar promise is made for the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ مِنْكُمْ لِي وَرَسُولِهِ وَتَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا نُؤْتَاهَا أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ (And whoever stands in obedience to Allah and His messenger and does righteous deeds, We will give her, her reward twice. - 33:31). In a *ḥadīth* of Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī three types of persons are mentioned for double reward

One, those people of the book who had faith in their prophets initially, and then developed faith in the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Two, the slave who is submissive and obedient to Allah Ta'ālā and His Messenger ﷺ, and also to his master. Three, the one who owned a slave girl, with whom he was allowed intercourse but he freed her and made her his formal wife by performing *nikāh*.

The point worth consideration in this verse is the cause for which these categories of Muslims are given their reward twice. One cause could be that they have done two good deeds for which they are entitled to double reward. In all these three cases there are two good deeds involved. In the case of believers two good deeds are faith in their own prophet first, and then in the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Qur'ān. In the case of the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, two good deeds are that they loved and obeyed the Holy Prophet ﷺ both as a prophet and as husband. As for the owner of the slave girl, his first good deed is to free her, and the second to marry her. But this explanation may be subjected to the objection that two rewards for two good deeds are applicable to all, according to norms of justice; so where is the distinction for the people of the book or believers, and the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, or the master of the slave girl? Keeping this objection in view I have answered the original question in another way which is fully described in my book *Aḥkām ul-Qur'ān* under Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ. According to that explanation, it is apparent by the wording of Qur'ān that in all these examples, the relevant persons will not get two rewards for two deeds, but they will get double reward for each single deed, because the principle of 'two rewards for two deeds' is applicable to all, according to the express declaration of the Qur'ān: *لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ* (I do not let go to waste the labour of a worker from you - 3:195), that is Allah Ta'ālā does not waste deeds of any one of you. In fact one will get reward for every single good deed he performs. Therefore the double reward contemplated for all these types, is that for every single good deed they will be awarded double the reward. For instance, they will be given two rewards for a single prayer, two rewards for a single charity, and two rewards for each one good deed like fasting, performing Ḥajj etc.. If one contemplates on the wordings of Qur'ān he will note that for giving two rewards the appropriate word was *أَجْرَيْنِ*, (two rewards) but instead of that Qur'ān has used the word *أَجْرُهُمْ* مرتين (their reward twice - 28:54), in

which there is a clear hint that all their good deeds will be written twice and they will get double the reward for each one of them.

As for the reason why these people have been chosen for such an extra ordinary reward, the straight answer is that it is Allah Ta'ālā's prerogative to declare any deed preferable or superior to other deeds, and enhance its reward. No one has the right to question as to why He has enhanced the reward for a particular act as compared to the other, or why has He increased the reward of fasting while He has not done so in the case of *zakāh* and charity. It is possible that the pedestal of deeds, mentioned in the verse under reference and the *ḥadīth* of Bukhārī, is higher in the sight of Allah in comparison to other deeds, and hence double the reward. Some prominent scholars have given the reason of this preference that they require excessive effort and hardship. This explanation is also probable, and the word بِمَا صَبَرُوا (because they observed patience) towards the end of this verse can be taken as a proof for the argument that the ground for double reward is their endurance on hardship. (Only Allah knows best).

وَيَذَرُهُنَّ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةِ (And they repel evil with good - 28:54). The scholars have made different assertions while explaining 'evil' and 'good deed' as they are contemplated in this verse. Some have explained that 'good deed' stands here for obedience, and 'evil' for sin, and the sense is that every good deed wipes out the sin, as is maintained in a *ḥadīth* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Sayyidnā Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَتَيْتُ الْحَسَنَةَ السَّيِّئَةَ فَطَمَسَتْهَا (Perform a good deed after an evil deed, and it will wipe out the evil). According to this interpretation, the verse is praising these people that whenever they commit an evil act by mistake, they wipe it out by doing some good act. Some others are of the opinion that *Ḥasanah* (good deed) in this verse is used for knowledge and serenity, and *sayyi'ah* for ignorance and negligence. Thus it means that these people respond to the ignorant acts of others with serenity and forbearance and not with a similar ignorance. As a matter of fact, there is no contradiction in these explanations, because the words *ḥasanah* and *sayyi'ah*, that is virtue and evil, encompass all these things.

There are two important advices in this verse:

Firstly, if someone commits a sin, its best remedy is that he should look for doing something good. The virtuous deed becomes expiation for the

sin, as quoted in the *ḥadīth* of Sayyidnā Mu'ādh رضي الله عنه above. Secondly, if a person behaves with someone badly, the wronged one is within his right to take revenge, provided he does not exceed the wrong done to him. However, it is much better for him that, instead of taking revenge, he returns the cruelty with kindness and the evil with virtue. It is an act of high degree of nobility of character. There are innumerable benefits in such an act, both in this world and in the Hereafter. In another Qur'ānic verse this advice is given in very clear words **إِذْفَعُ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ** (Repel with that which is fairer and behold, he between whom and thee there is enmity shall be as if he were a loyal friend - 41:34). It means that one should act kindly in return of cruelty. In this way his foe will become his sincere friend.

لَا تَنْفَعِي الْجَاهِلِينَ (Peace be on you. We do not seek (the way of) the ignorant. - 28:55). These people have a good quality in that when they hear something stupid from an ignorant foe, they simply say *salām*, instead of giving a reply. They do not entangle themselves with the ignorant. Imām Jaṣṣāṣ رحمه الله تعالى has said that there are two kinds of *salāms*. One is for salutation, as Muslims do to one another. The other type is for *musālamah* (adopting peaceful attitude with others) and *mutārahah*, (to avoid debate) which is to convey to one's adversary that he does not wish to take note of the latter's stupidity. At this place the latter meaning is intended.

Verse 56

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

You cannot give guidance to whomsoever you wish, but Allah gives guidance to whomsoever He wills, and He knows best the ones who are on the right path. [56]

Commentary

The word *هَدَايَة* *hidāyah* (guidance) is used for several meanings. One meaning is to show the path, which does not necessarily mean that the one shown the path will reach his destination. Another meaning of *hidāyah* is to make one reach his destination. According to first meaning

of the word it is but obvious that the Holy Prophet ﷺ and all other prophets were guides, and that imparting guidance was within their control, because it was the obligation of their duty. If they did not have the control over imparting guidance, how could have they fulfilled their obligation? Therefore, the statement made in this verse that he did not have control over guidance, relate to the second meaning of this word that is to make one reach his destination. It means that it was not his duty or obligation to put faith in one's heart in order to make him convert to Islam by his teachings and preaching. This is in the control of Allah Ta'ālā only. The meaning and types of *hidāyah* have already been discussed in detail under Sūrah Al-Baqarah.

Saḥīḥ Muslim has reported that this verse was revealed about the Holy Prophet's ﷺ uncle, Abū Ṭālib. It was his ﷺ great desire that Abū Ṭālib should accept the faith. It was for this desire that he was advised that it was not within his control to put faith in anybody's heart. It is observed in Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī that one should abstain from discussing or passing judgment unnecessarily on the subject of acceptance of faith or otherwise by Abū Ṭālib, because this may hurt the Holy Prophet's ﷺ feelings for his natural love toward his uncle. (وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ)

Verses 57 - 60

وَقَالُوا إِن تَتَّبِعِ الْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ تَتَخَطَّفُ مِنَّا أَوْلَامُنَا أَوْ لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَهُمْ
 حَرَمًا آمِنًا يُجْبَىٰ إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رِّزْقًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ
 لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِّن قَرْيَةٍ مِّن قَرْيَةٍ بَطَرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا ۖ فَتِلْكَ
 مَسْكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَنْ مِّن بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۗ وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ الْوَارِثِينَ
 ﴿٥٨﴾ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمَمٍ رَّسُولًا
 يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِم آيَاتِنَا ۗ وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَىٰ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾
 وَمَا أَوْتَيْتُمْ مِّن شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا ۗ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
 خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

And they said, "If we follow the guidance with you (O

Muḥammad), we will be driven out of our land." Is it not that We have established them in the peaceful Haram (sanctuary) to which the fruits of everything are drawn as a provision from Us? But most of them do not know. [57] And how many a town have We destroyed that were over-proud of their means of living. So, those are their habitations which were never inhabited after them except a few, and We alone were the inheritors. [58] And your Lord is not to destroy the towns unless he sends to their central place a messenger who recites to them Our verses. And We are not to destroy the towns except when their people are wrongdoers. [59] And whatever of anything you are given is (no more than) an enjoyment of the worldly life and its decoration, and that which is with Allah is much better and far more lasting. So do you not understand? [60]

Commentary

وَقَالُوا إِن تَتَّبِعِ الْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ تَتَخَطَّفُ مِنَّا أَرْضُنَا (And they said, "If we follow the guidance with you (O Muḥammad), we will be driven out of our land." - 28:57). Ḥārith Ibn Uthmān and other infidels of Makkah put forward one of the reasons for their non-acceptance of faith that although they believed that his teachings were based on truth, but they feared that if they followed him, the entire people of Arabia would turn against them, and as a consequence they will be driven out of their land. (Nasai'ī etc.). The Holy Qur'ān has given three answers to their lame excuse. One, **أَوَلَمْ** **أُولَئِكَ** **نُفِخَ فِيهِمُ** **أَنَّ** **أَرْضَهُمْ** **سَاءَ** **الَّذِينَ** **كَفَرُوا** **بِهَا** **وَأَنَّهُمْ** **يَكْفُرُونَ** **بِهَا** **وَأَنَّهُمْ** **يَكْفُرُونَ** **بِهَا** (Is it not that We have established them in the peaceful *haram* (sanctuary) to which the fruits of everything are drawn as a provision from Us - 28:57) that is this excuse of theirs is false, because Allah Ta'ālā had already made special arrangements for the safety of the people of Makkah by making its land *haram*. All the tribes of Arabia, despite their mutual feuds and infidelity, were unanimous on the point that killing and feuds were strictly prohibited on the land of Makkah. If a killer of father met the son in the *haram*, despite extremely strong feelings of revenge, he could not raise his hand against him. It was just not possible for any one to kill or harm his enemy on the ground of *haram*. Therefore, it was not at all a convincing excuse for not converting to faith. How was it possible that the Creator of everything would let them die as a believer, when He had made arrangement for their safety in *haram* even as infidels? Yaḥyā Ibn Sallām has explained this verse as:

'You were safe and secure because of *ḥaram*, and were enjoying the sustenance provided by Me in plenty, still you used to worship others instead of Me. You did not get worried over this situation of yours, and on the contrary got worried over conversion to faith in Me'. (Qurṭubī)

In this verse two qualities of *ḥaram* are described. One, that it is a place of peace, and the other that fruits from different parts of the world were brought there.

Availability of all types of produce in *Ḥaram* of Makkah is a special Divine gift

Allah Ta'ālā chose Makkah Mukkarramah, out of the whole world, to establish the Ka'ba and Haram. In terms of its environment and geography it is a region where, under the normal circumstances, hardly any economic or commercial goods and activity should have existed. Even the basic staple agricultural products like wheat, rice, gram and sundry cereals were not cultivated before on a significant scale, let alone fruits and variety of vegetables. Though, in recent years there has been some emphasis from the Saudi Government toward their cultivation. Yet, everything is available there in such an abundance that one gets amazed. During the period of *ḥajj* some two million people are drawn from all over the world and stay there for an average of one month. It has never been heard that any scarcity of food items was ever experienced there. On the contrary, everyone can witness that cooked and prepared food to cater for all types of races and people is readily available all the time. If we ponder over Qur'ānic words, which say نَمْرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ (fruits of everything), a question arises that fruits are the product of trees, so it would have been apt to say نَمْرَاتُ كُلِّ شَجَرٍ (fruits of every tree) rather than نَمْرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ (fruits of every thing). Therefore, it is quite likely that the word 'every thing' used here, encompasses the produce and products of all kind, including agricultural produce. For instance, the produce of industrial factories is also their fruit. Hence, the gist of the discussion is that not only food items but also all sorts of things of human need would be made available in Makkah. Any one visiting Makkah, either for *ḥajj* or *'umrah*, can confirm that everything produced anywhere in the world is readily available there. This was one reply to the excuse put forward by the infidels of Makkah, and the gist of the reply was that the Lord who had been so kind to them that He had made available all the bounties of the world in

their city, despite the fact that they are not produced there, and who had made the city completely free of risk and danger, it is the worst kind of ignorance to presume about Him that He would deprive them of these benefits if they would believe in Him.

The second reply to their excuse is given in the next verse وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ بَطَرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا (And how many a town have We destroyed that were over-proud of their means of living. - 28:58). In this reply it is stressed that they should recall the plight of other infidel people of the world, how their habitations, strong forts, and all means of their protection were destroyed, because of their infidelity and rejection of the truth. What they should actually fear is their infidelity and associating others with Allah, which is the real cause of destruction. How foolish and ill informed they were that they feared faith and not the denial of truth and infidelity.

The third reply was given in the following verse: وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا (And whatever thing you are given is the enjoyment of the worldly life - 28:60). Here it is explained that just in case they did get involved in some sort of trouble as a result of accepting faith, it would last only for a few days. Just as mundane wealth and comfort is temporary and would last for a short time only, worldly troubles are also transient and short-lived. Therefore, the wisdom lies in that one should seek and care for the comfort and happiness that is lasting. If one has to suffer trouble for a short time for the sake of permanent and ever lasting wealth and comfort, it is well worth it.

لَمْ تُسْكَنْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (Which were never inhabited after them except a few - 28:56). The habitations of the earlier people, which were destroyed by the Divine torment, still lie uninhabited, with the exception of a few. If the exemption 'except a few' is taken for those living there and the places destroyed, as Zajjāj has construed it, then the meaning would be that those places could never get inhabited, except a few that are inhabited. But Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has given another explanation of the verse. According to his interpretation, the exemption is not for the place and houses, but for the time. Thus the meaning would be that even if someone lives there, it is for a short time, like travelers, who cannot be regarded as permanent residents.

حَتَّى يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمَمِهِا رَسُولًا (Unless he sends to their central place a messenger -

28:59). Popular meaning of the word 'Umm is mother, and since mother is the very basis of human creation, hence the word 'Umm (أُمُّ) is also used extensively for origin, base, and foundation. The pronoun *hā* (translated above as 'their') refers back to the towns, and 'mother of the towns' means the central town. The meaning of the verse is that Allah Ta'ālā does not destroy a people unless He had sent His message through His messengers in their main cities. When the invitation to truth had reached, and yet people did not accept it, only then the torment is sent on those cities.

This verse has pointed out that Allah's messengers and prophets are generally sent in big cities, and not in smaller towns, because such towns are normally under the influence of big cities, both for their economic and educational needs. If something is known in a big city, it becomes known automatically in the smaller towns around it. Hence, when a prophet is sent in a big city and he starts his call to the truth, the message is spread out in the surrounding towns in no time. This way Allah Ta'ālā's message reaches to all and sundry, and if they reject the message of truth, the torment is sent to all of them.

Small towns and villages are subject to the same laws as are applicable to the main cities

As in the case of economic needs, the smaller habitations are dependent on cities, and draw their requirements from there, similarly, when a law or an order is promulgated in the city, it automatically becomes effective in the surrounding towns and villages also. The excuse of having no knowledge of the law is not acceptable.

In the case of sighting of the moon for observing Ramaḍān and Eids (Shawwāl and Dhulhajjah) too, the same principle has been declared by the jurists as applicable. That is, if the evidence of witnesses in the city establishes the sighting of moon, then the people of towns and villages would have to follow the same. But in the case of other cities, it would only apply when the Qāḍī of that city accepts the evidence and makes the announcement. (Al-Fatāwā al-Ghayāthiyyah)

وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى (And that which is with Allah is much better and far more lasting - 28:60). That is the mundane wealth and comforts are all mortal. But the recompense one would get in the Hereafter for the good deeds done in the world is much superior and ever lasting as compared to

the temporary worldly wealth and comforts. The best of comforts of this world are no match to the bounties of the Hereafter. Then, no matter how attractive mundane comforts are, they are but temporary. As against that, the bounties of the Hereafter will last forever. There is no doubt that anyone having some sense would prefer the better comforts and the ones that will last for ever, rather than the short-lived temporary ones.

The sign of prudence is that one does not involve himself too much in worldly matters and cares more for the Hereafter

Imām Shafi'ī رحمه الله تعالى has said that if a person bequeaths his wealth and property to be given to the wisest men, then the beneficiaries of such a will are those busy in worshipping and obeying Allah Ta'ālā, because what they are doing is the demand of wisdom, and no doubt they are the wisest among worldly people. This ruling is also mentioned in Ad-Durr-al-Mukhtār, the famous book of Ḥanafī school. See its chapter on '*wasiyyah*'.

Verses 61 - 67

أَمَّنْ وَعَدْنَاهُ وَعَدًّا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ لَاقِيهِ كَمَنْ مَتَّعْنَاهُ مَتَاعَ الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿٦١﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ
فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَاءِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَغْوَيْنَا كَمَا غَوَيْنَا تَبَرَّأْنَا
إِلَيْكَ مَا كَانُوا إِلَّا نَا يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ وَقِيلَ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ
فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ وَرَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أَجَبْتُمُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾
فَعَمِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَنْبَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَهُمْ لَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ تَابَ
وَأَمَّنْ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُفْلِحِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

Is then the one, to whom We have made a good promise which he is going to meet, like the one whom We have given the benefit of enjoying the worldly life, then on

the Day of Judgment he will be among those arraigned?
 [61] And (remember) the Day when He will call them and say, "Where are My 'partners' you used to claim?
 [62] Those against whom the word will come true will say, "Our Lord, these are the ones whom we led astray. We led them astray as we ourselves went astray. We negate before you our responsibility (in respect of them); it was not we (alone) whom they worshipped.
 [63] And it will be said, "Call upon your co-gods." So they will call upon them, but they will not respond to them, and they will see the punishment. Would that they had taken the right path! [64]

And (remember) the Day when He (Allah) will call them and say, "What response did you give to the messengers?" [65] So the events will be obscured to them and they will not (be able to) ask each other. [66] As for the one who repents and becomes a believer and acts righteously, it is likely that he will be among the successful. [67]

Commentary

The very first question infidels and disbelievers will be asked at the Tumultuous Place (*maḥshar*) will be about *shirk* (associating someone else with Allah), that is, 'where are those Satans today whom you used to associate with Us? Can they provide you any help today?' In response to these queries the disbelievers would say that it was not a fault of theirs, as they did not associate them with Allah on their own. It was the Satan who deluded them. Then Allah Ta'ālā would ask the Satans to say if they had anything in their defense; who, while accepting their role of deceit, would plead that they had only misled them but did not force them to act upon the same. Thus, the Satans would confess that they did commit the crime, but the infidels too were not free from its commission. Because just as they led them astray, similarly at the same time, the prophets and their deputies also guided them towards the Right Path with sound arguments; making the Truth crystal clear to them. They rejected the Truth presented by the prophets and instead listened to us using their free will and discretion. So, how could they be free from the blame? It proves that if someone chooses to follow those who wish to put him on the wrong path on his own good will, despite the fact that he has before him clear cut arguments against them and the righteous way to follow, then he has no

excuse to offer.

Verses 68 - 73

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۗ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ ۗ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا
يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ وَهُوَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۗ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الْأُولَىٰ وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَلَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ
الَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِضِيَاءٍ ۗ أَفَلَا
تَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ النَّهَارَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ ۗ أَفَلَا
تَبْصُرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَمِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ لَيْلًا وَالنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ
وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَلِعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses. Choice is not with them. Pure is Allah and far higher than their ascribing of partners to Him. [68] And your Lord knows what their hearts conceal and what they reveal. [69] And He is Allah. There is no god but He. To Him belongs the praise in the beginning and at the end, and He alone has the right to judge, and to Him you are to be returned. [70]

Say, "Tell me, if Allah makes night continuing upon you for ever upto the Day of Judgment, which god, other than Allah, would bring to you light? Then, do you not listen?" [71] Say, "Tell me, if Allah makes the day continuing upon you for ever upto the Day of Judgment, which god, other than Allah, would bring to you night in which you may have comfort? Then, do you not see?" [72] And it is out of His mercy that He has made day and night for you, so that you may have comfort therein and so that you may search for His grace, and so that you may be grateful. [73]

Commentary

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ (And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses - 28:68). According to one interpretation of this verse, the choice referred to here is Allah's choice with regard to the divine commands, and the sense is that as Allah Ta'ālā is unique in the creation of universe and no one is His partner, so is He in the issuance of His commands. He can give out any command to His creatures. But Imām Baghawī, in his commentary, and 'Allāmah Ibn Al-Qayyim in the preface of Zād al-Ma'ād have adopted another interpretation according to which the choice of Allah Ta'ālā, as envisaged in this verse, relates to the prerogative of Allah Ta'ālā by which He selects any one from His creatures for His favours. According to Bagahwī, this was the reply given to the infidels of Makkah on their observation لَوْلَا نَزَلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرِيبَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ (Why was this Qur'an not sent down upon some man of moment in the two cities? - 43:31) that is, 'If Allah had wished to reveal this Qur'an He should have revealed it on some dignitary of Makkah or Tā'if, so that he should have had respect and reverence. What was the wisdom in revealing it on a poor orphan?' In answer to this suggestion it is said in the present verse that it is the prerogative of the Lord of universe, who has created all the creatures without any help or partner, to select any one from His creatures for the special favours He wishes to confer. It is not for you to suggest whom He should or should not select, nor is He bound to listen to your suggestions.

Giving preference to one thing over the other or to one person over the other, and determination of correct standard of preference, are all Divine prerogatives

Hāafiz Ibn Al-Qayyim has drawn an outstanding rule from this verse that the preference given to places and things in this world are not achieved by them with their own efforts or deeds, but it is the result of direct selection and prerogative of the Creator of the universe. He has created seven skies, out of which He has given preference to highest sky over others, although the material of all is the same. Similarly, He has given preference to *Jannah al-Firdaus* over all other parts of the Jannah. Then, He preferred Jibra'īl, Mikā'īl, Isrā'fīl, etc. over all other angels, and has placed prophets on highest pedestal among the humans. And among the prophets has given preference to more resolute ones over all other prophets. Then among the resolute, He has given preference to

His Khalīl Ibrāhīm and Ḥabīb Muḥammad ﷺ over all other resolute prophets. Then preference is given to progeny of Isma'īl عليه السلام over all other people of the world, then to Quraish among the progeny of Isma'īl عليه السلام, and to Banī Hashim over all the Quraish, and finally to Sayyidnā Muḥammad Muṣṭafa ﷺ over entire Banī Hashim. Similarly, the preference given to companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and other elders of the Ummah, is all under the control and prerogative of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ālā, and the result of His selection.

In the same way, many places of the world are preferred over other places, and many days and nights have preference over the normal days and nights. In short, the original standard of preference in the entire universe is His prerogative and selection. However, at times, human acts may also become a cause of preference in the sense that those performing righteous acts are preferred over the others, and the places where such people live or perform virtuous acts may also acquire preference over other places. This preference can be gained by sincerity of effort and righteous deeds. The gist of this discussion is that the basis of preference in the world is dependent on two things. One is beyond one's control and rests entirely on the selection of Allah Ta'ālā, and the other is within the ability of human beings and may be achieved by righteous deeds and superior morals. Allāmah Ibn al-Qayyim has deliberated in great detail on this subject and has concluded that the four Rightly Guided Caliphs have precedence over all other companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Then Sayyidnā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه has preference over other three Caliphs. After that Sayyidnā 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه has preference over the other two, and Sayyidnā 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه over Sayyidnā 'Alī رضي الله عنه. He has proved this sequence with the help of two standards discussed above. Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlavi رحمه الله تعالى has also written a booklet on this subject in Persian language, which I have translated in Urdu and Arabic. Urdu translation has been published under the title (بعض التفصيل لمسئلة التفضيل), and Arabic translation is included in my book Aḥkām al-Qur'ān, under Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ. This is a research work that would be of interest to scholars.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ اللَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ إِلَهُ غَيْرَ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ
بِضِيَاءٍ، أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ (الى قوله) بَلَّيْلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ.

Say, "Tell me, if Allah makes night continuing upon you for

ever upto the Day of Judgment, which god, other than Allah, would bring to you light? Then do you not listen?". Say, "Tell me, if Allah makes the day continuing upon you for ever upto the Day of Judgment, which god, other than Allah, would bring to you night in which you may have comfort. Then, do you not see?" 28:71-72.

Allah Ta'ālā has mentioned a benefit of the night in this verse, that it provides rest *بَلِيلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ* (28:72). As against this no mention is made about the benefits of day while referring to its light. The reason for this omission is but obvious. It is a well-known fact that the daylight is superior in its entity to darkness. The benefits of daylight are so numerous and well known that their repetition was not prudent. On the contrary the darkness of the night does not have any other benefit except that it provides rest to every thing. As a matter of fact, its utility is based on the rest of people, hence that has been mentioned. It is to be noted that after describing daylight it is concluded with *أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ* (Do you not listen? - 28:71), and after describing the night the concluding expression is *أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ* (Do you not see? - 28:72). It may have the allusion that the benefits of the day are so numerous that they cannot be seen, but can only be heard; hence the expression *أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ* is used. The knowledge and understanding humans have acquired has mainly come through hearing and listening, and very little by way of seeing. The benefits of night are much less as compared to benefits of the day, and they can be seen; hence the expression *أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ* (Mazhari)

Verses 74 - 75

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَائِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾
 وَنَزَعْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا فَقُلْنَا هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ فَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ الْحَقَّ
 لِلَّهِ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

And (remember) the Day when He (Allah) will call them (the disbelievers) and say, "Where are My 'partners' you used to claim?" [74] And We will draw out a witness from every community (to prove their disbelief) and will say, "Bring your proof". Then they will know that truth is from Allah, and all that they used to forge shall

vanish from them. [75]

Commentary

A question that will be asked from the infidels on the Day of Judgment to repeat what they had replied to the prophets on their invitation to truth was mentioned in an earlier verse. Now in this verse it is stated that the prophets would testify about the reply that was given by the infidels.

Verses 76 - 82

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَأَتَيْنَهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا
 إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولَى الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ
 اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا
 تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ
 الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا
 أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَى عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَم أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنَ
 الْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرَ جَمْعًا ۗ وَلَا يُسْئَلُ عَنْ ذُنُوبِهِمُ
 الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ ۗ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ
 الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونَ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَدُوْحَطٍ عَظِيمٍ
 ﴿٧٩﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَنْ آمَنَ
 وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ۗ وَلَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبَدَارِهِ
 الْأَرْضَ ۗ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ فِئَةٍ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ
 مِنَ الْمُنتَصِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَأَصْبَحَ الَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا مَكَانَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ
 وَيَكَانَ اللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ ۗ لَوْلَا أَنْ مَنَّ
 اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ بِنَا ۗ وَيَكَانَهُ ۗ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

Surely, Qārūn was from the people of Mūsā, then he

rebelled against them. And We had given to him such treasures as their keys would weigh too heavy for a strong group of people. (Remember) when his people said to him, "Do not exult. Surely, Allah does not like the exultant. [76] And seek the (betterment of) the Ultimate Abode with what Allah has given to you, and do not neglect your share from this world, and do good as Allah did good to you, and do not seek to make mischief in the land. Surely, Allah does not like the mischief-makers." [77] He said, "This is given to me because of the knowledge (I have) with me." Did he not know that Allah had destroyed, from the generations before him, those who were stronger than him in power and greater than him in multitude? And the sinners have not to be asked about their sins. [78] Then (once) he came out before his people in his embellishment, said those who are desirous of the worldly life, "Would that we had the like of what Qārūn has been given! He is a man of great fortune indeed." [79] And said those who were given knowledge, "Woe to you, Allah's reward is much better for the one who believes and acts righteously. And this is given to none but to those who observe restraint." [80] Then We made him and his home sink into the earth. So there was no group for him who could help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who defend themselves. [81] And those who wished to be in his position the day before, started saying, "Oh, it seems that Allah extends provision to whom He wills and straitens (for whom He wills). Had Allah not favoured us, He would have made us sink (too). Oh, it seems that the infidels do not succeed." [82]

Commentary

From the beginning of Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ to this point, the story of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام with the Pharaoh and his people was narrated. From here onward another story about him is being related which is about Qārūn, who belonged to his own fraternity. This story has an affinity with the previous verses in that it was said in an earlier verse that the wealth you are given in this world is temporary, and it is not wise to get involved in its love. وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا (And whatever thing you are given is the enjoyment of the worldly life - 28:60). Now in the story of Qārūn it is described that he forgot this caution after having received the

wealth and got so much intoxicated by it that he displayed ingratitude and rejected to fulfill his obligations toward Allah Ta'ālā with regard to bounties he had received from Him. As a consequence of that, he was sunk in the ground along with his treasure.

Qārūn is a non-Arabic word, perhaps from Hebrew. It is stated in the Qur'an itself that he belonged to the fraternity of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, Banī Isrā'īl. As for his actual relationship with Mūsā عليه السلام, there are different versions. In a narration of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه he is mentioned as a cousin of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام. There are some other versions also beside this. (Qurṭubī and Rūḥ).

A narration of Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq, reproduced in Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī, has observed that Qārūn remembered Torah more than any other Isrā'īli, but turned out to be a hypocrite like Sāmīrī. The cause of his hypocrisy was his misplaced love and greed for worldly wealth and status. Leadership of the entire Banī Isrā'īl was conferred on Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام and his brother, Sayyidnā Hārūn عليه السلام, who was his assistant and partner in prophethood. Hence, Qārūn got jealous that after all he was also a cousin, but why did he not have a share in the leadership. So, he made a complaint to that effect before Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام. He replied that it was all from Allah Ta'ālā, and he had no power in this matter. But Qārūn was not convinced on this reply and developed jealousy against Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام.

فَبَغَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ (Then he rebelled against them - 28:76). There are quite a few meanings of the word بَغَىٰ *Baghā*. The more popular meaning is to commit cruelty. It is possible to take this word in this meaning here. Thus the meaning of the sentence would be that having got intoxicated by his wealth, he started perpetrating cruelty on people. Yaḥyā Ibn Sallam and Sa'īd Ibn Al-Musayyab have stated that Qārūn was a wealthy man, and was appointed by the Pharaoh to keep vigilance on Banī Isrā'īl. Taking advantage of this position, he started harassing Banī Isrā'īl. (Qurṭubī)

The other meaning of *Baghā* is conceit or arrogance. Many a commentators have adopted this meaning here. Hence, the meaning of the verse would be that having got intoxicated by his wealth, he became conceited and looked down upon Banī Isrā'īl.

وَأَتَيْنَهُمَ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ (And We had given to them such treasures - 28:76). *Kunūz*

(كُنُوزٌ) is the plural of كَنْزٌ (Kanz), which means buried treasure. In the commonly used religious sense *Kanz* is that treasure on which *zakāh* is not paid. Sayyidnā 'Aṭā' رضي الله عنه has narrated that he got hold of a magnificent buried treasure of Sayyidnā Yūsuf عليه السلام. (Rūḥ)

لَتَنْوَأَنَّ بِالْعُصْبَةِ (would weigh too heavy for a strong group - 28:76). The word نَأَى (Nā'a) means to bend down with weight, and عُصْبَةٌ 'Uṣbah' means a group. The meaning of the sentence is that his treasures were so many and their keys were in such large number, that if a group of strong people would try to lift them, they would bend down under their weight. Normally the keys of the locks are light, but because of their large number, their weight had multiplied so much that it was not possible even for a group of strong persons to lift them all. (Rūḥ)

لَا تَفْرَحْ (Do not exult - 28:76). Literal meaning of the word فَرَحٌ (Faraḥ) is the happiness one gets as a result of an instant pleasure. Many a Qur'ānic verses have declared Faraḥ as contemptible, as in this very verse also إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ (Allah does not like the exultant - 28:76). In another verse it is said لَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ (nor rejoice in what has come to you - 57:23). Yet another verse says فَرِحُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا (And they are happy with the worldly life - 13:26). But in some verses Faraḥ is allowed, rather in a way it is declared as desirable. For example in verses, يَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (And on that day the believers will rejoice - 30:4) and فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا (with these they should rejoice - 10:58). All these verses put together give us the guideline that Faraḥ is contemptible and is not allowed when it reaches the level of arrogance and boasting. Thus one gets to a point where he regards the attainment of pleasure as his own personal achievement, and not a gift and favour from Allah Ta'ālā. But if the happiness and pleasure does not get to that position, then it is not disallowed; rather in a way it is desirable. In such a situation happiness would be to express the gratitude to Allah Ta'ālā.

وَاتَّبِعْ فِيْمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا (And seek the (betterment of) the ultimate Abode with what Allah has given to you, and do not neglect your share from this world - 28:77). The Muslims advised Qārūn that he should try to do as much good as possible for the Hereafter by utilizing the wealth Allah Ta'ālā had given him, and 'should not forget his share in the world'.

What is his 'share in this world'? Many commentators have explained that it refers to his life in this world and the deeds that may help him in the Hereafter which include charity and all other righteous deeds. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه has favoured this explanation. (Qurṭubī) By adopting this explanation, the second sentence would be regarded as an emphasized repetition of the first sentence. The first sentence has directed that one should make use of all that has been gifted – the life, wealth, health, strength etc. – to collect that which would be of help in the Hereafter. In fact this portion of the worldly possessions is one's own, which may help him in the Hereafter; the rest of the world's possessions belongs to his heirs.

However, some other commentators have explained that the meaning of the second sentence is that whatever Allah has given you, make use of it for the Hereafter, without losing sight of your needs in this world. In other words do not become a pauper by giving away every thing in charity. Instead, retain something for your own needs as well. Under this explanation, 'your share in the world' means one's own needs in this world.

إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي (This is given to me because of knowledge (I have) with me - 28:78). Some commentators are of the view that "knowledge" in this sentence refers to the understanding of Torah. As reported in some narrations, Qārūn remembered Torah by heart and was an authority on it. He was one of the seventy scholars whom Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had selected for *Miqāt* (the appointed time and place for having conversation with Allah). But he became conceited on his knowledge, and regarded it as his personal achievement. The object of his above-referred utterance was to convey that whatever wealth he had possessed was the direct result of his personal skill and intelligence. Hence, he himself had the right on it, and that no one had done any favour to him.

However, it is more plausible in the context that the knowledge he was referring to as the basic cause of his being wealthy, was the understanding and skill of managing trade and industry, which brings in wealth. Thus the meaning is that whatever wealth he had collected had come to him as a result of his personal skill and efforts, and there was no favour of Allah Ta'ālā involved in it. What the foolish conceited man had ignored was that his skill, understanding, and experience were also the

gift of Allah. He could not have gained them on his own.

أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَم أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ (Did he not know that Allah had destroyed, from the generations before him...28:78). The real answer to Qārūn's assertion that he had collected all his wealth by his personal skill and efforts is the one mentioned above; that even if it is accepted for a moment that he had acquired his wealth by his personal skill and knowledge, the point is that this knowledge and experience was also the gift of Allah Ta'ālā. But in order to bring home the more important aspect of the subject, the Qur'an has stated that the abundance of wealth is of no avail and is devoid of merit, nor does it help in distress. As a proof of that, the example of the wealthy from the earlier generations has been quoted, that when they disobeyed and rejected the truth, they were suddenly caught by the torment of Allah Ta'ālā.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلَكُمْ (And said those who were given knowledge - 28:80). This verse has compared the knowledgeable persons with الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ (Those who are desirous of the worldly life - 28:79), which clearly indicates that it is not the trait of knowledgeable persons to aspire for the acquisition of wealth and to make it the object of life. They always keep their eyes toward the lasting benefits of the Hereafter. As for the mundane wealth, they take it only to fulfill their day-to-day needs, and stay content with that.

Verses 83 - 84

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
فَسَادًا وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا ؕ
وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى الَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

As for that Ultimate Abode (the Hereafter), We assign it to those who intend neither haughtiness on earth nor mischief. And the (best) end is for the God-fearing. [83] Whoever brings good deed shall have better than it, and whoever brings evil deed, then those who commit evils shall not be punished except for what they used to do. [84]

Commentary

لِّلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فُسَادًا (We assign it to those who intend neither haughtiness on earth nor mischief. - 28:83). This verse tells us that only those will achieve salvation and success in the Hereafter who do not intend any mischief, nor are indulged in 'Uluww in this world. 'Uluww means pride or conceit, that is, to present oneself as superior before others, and to look down upon others and treat them in an insulting manner. Mischief is used here for oppression. (Sufyān Ath-Thaurī). Some commentators have observed that every sin is a 'mischief in the world', because the nuisance of the sin curtails the blessings of the world. This verse tells us that those who intend to do cruelty and feel proud, or commit sin have no share in the Hereafter.

Special Note

Arrogance and conceit as condemned in this verse, is the behavior in which one shows off as being superior, and looks down upon others. Otherwise to strive for oneself a good dress, a good house, and good food, when it is not intended to show off, is no sin, as reported in a *ḥadīth* in Saḥīḥ Muslim.

Firm intention to commit a sin is also sin

It is clarified in this verse that the intention for mischief and pride will debar one from the share of Hereafter. It is, therefore, clear that the firm intention of a sin is as much a sin. (Rūḥ). However, if one changes his mind for fear of Allah, then a reward is noted in his record instead of sin. But if he fails to act on that sin, due to reasons beyond his control, while he had firm intention to act upon it, then the sin stays against his name, and will be recorded as such. (Ghazzālī)

The last verse وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (And the (best) end is for the God-fearing - 28:83) elaborates that it is not enough to abstain from mischief and pride to get the share of the Hereafter, but following the righteous path is as much a requirement. To follow all the religious obligations is also essential for the salvation in the Hereafter.

Verses 85 - 88

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَأْدُكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادٍ ۗ قُلْ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ مَنْ

جَاءَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَمَنْ هُوَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَمَا كُنْتَ تَرْجُو أَن
يُلْقَىٰ إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابُ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْكَافِرِينَ
﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَا يَصُدُّنكَ عَنِ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أُنزِلَتْ إِلَيْكَ وَادْعُ إِلَىٰ
رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ
لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ۗ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ
تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

Surely the One who has enjoined the Qur'ān upon you will surely bring you back to a place of return. Say, "My Lord knows best the one who has come with guidance and the one who is in manifest error." [85] And you were not expecting that the Book would be sent down to you, but it was a mercy from your Lord. So, never be a supporter for the infidels. [86] And let them not prevent you from Allah's verses after they are sent down to you, and call (people) to your Lord, and never become one of those who associate partners with Allah. [87] And do not invoke any other god alongwith Allah. There is no god but He. Every thing is going to perish except His Face. He alone has the right to judge, and to Him you are to be returned. [88]

Commentary

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَأْدُكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادِ (Surely the One who has enjoined the Qur'ān upon you will surely bring you back to a place of return. - 28:85). At the end of Sūrah these verses were revealed to console the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and to make him firm in his mission as a messenger. These verses are relevant to the previous verses in that in this Sūrah, Allah Ta'ālā has narrated in detail the story of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام with the Pharaoh, his enmity with Banī Isrā'īl, their fear of him and how he overpowered the people of the Pharaoh. Since the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ faced a similar situation in that he was harassed, and plans were made to kill him, the lives of Muslims were made miserable in Makkah, but following His old tradition, Allah graced them with victory over all of them. He finally gifted the Muslims possession of Makkah, from

where they were made to vacate.

الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ (The One who has enjoined the Qur'an upon you - 28:85). It means that the Lord of the universe who has made it obligatory on you to recite, teach and act on it, will take you back to *Ma'ād*, which lexically means 'a place of return'. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has explained that *Ma'ād* in this verse refers to Makkah, as reported in Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. So, the meaning of the sentence is that although the Holy Prophet ﷺ would have to leave his hometown, especially the *ḥaram* for a short while, he would be brought back in Makkah by Allah Ta'ālā, who had revealed the Qur'an on him, and had made it obligatory to act upon it. The Imām of tafsīr, Muqātil, has narrated that during the *hijrah* (emigration) from Makkah to Madīnah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ came out from the cave of *Thaur* at night, and bypassing the conventional route, treaded the unfamiliar paths, because the enemies were pursuing him. When he ﷺ reached Juḥfah, which was a well-known place on the way to Madīnah near Rābigh, and where the conventional route to Madīnah separates from that of Makkah, at that time he glanced back toward the route of Makkah and remembered his hometown. On that moment, Jibra'īl ؑ descended with this verse, in which he was given the good tidings that separation from Makkah was temporary and he would return there soon. That was in fact the advance news of the victory of Makkah. It is in this background that Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has observed in a narration that this verse was revealed in Juḥfah, and that it is neither Makkī nor Madanī. (Qurṭubī).

Qur'an is a means of victory over enemies and of one's success in his objectives

While promising to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he will be brought back by Allah to his hometown which will be conquered by him, Allah Ta'ālā has made a special reference to Himself as 'the One who has enjoined the Qur'an on him'. This reference contains a hint to the fact that recitation of Qur'an and acting on its injunctions would actually be the cause of the Divine help and manifest victory.

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ (Every thing is going to perish except His Face - 28:88). The word 'His Face' in this verse means the very Being of Allah Ta'ālā. Hence, the meaning of the verse is that except for Allah Ta'ālā every thing is mortal and will get destroyed and will vanish. Some

commentators have taken the phrase 'His Face' to mean the good deeds performed by human beings exclusively for Allah Ta'ālā. In that case the meaning of the verse would be that those actions which are performed exclusively for Allah Ta'ālā will not be destroyed, while all other things will perish.

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ *Alḥamdulillāh*, today on Dhulqa'dah 9, 1391 H, the commentary on Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ has concluded in such conditions that Pakistan was attacked by India and the unholy alliance of the big powers. For fourteen days Karachi was bombarded daily. The city was severely damaged. Hundreds of Muslims were martyred, and many a houses were demolished. Fourteen days war finished on the sad note that East Pakistan is cut off from Pakistan, and about ninety thousand troops have surrendered there. Killing is still going on in East Pakistan. Every Muslim is stuck with grief and bewilderment.

اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رَاٰجِعُوْنَ وَاِلَيْهِ الْمَشْتٰكِيْ وَلَا مَلْجَا وَلَا مَنجَا مِنَ اللّٰهِ اِلَّا اِلَيْهِ

Alḥamdulillāh
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Qaṣaṣ
Ends here.